

POIS 235: POLITICAL RESEARCH METHODS AND APPROACHES

Fall 2020 (HyFlex)

Instructor: Florian Justwan, Ph.D.
Class: Monday, Wednesday, Friday; 12:30 pm - 01:20 pm (AD 227)
Monday, Wednesday, Friday; 02:30 pm - 03:20 pm (AD 336)
Office Hours: Monday, 10:30 am - 12:30 pm (Administration 323) or via zoom (link see below)
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COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course has three main goals. *First*, students should become familiar with the scientific study of politics (including but not limited to formulating research questions, conducting literature reviews, formulating hypotheses, and constructing various research designs). *Second*, course participants will learn how to write a Political Science research paper. *Third*, students will become familiar with the various subfields of Political Science. Taken as a whole, this class contributes to several of our university's learning outcomes (including: Learn and Integrate; Think and Create; Communicate).

The course is organized as follows. During the first section of the class, we will focus on Research Questions (RQs) in Political Science. More specifically, we will discuss what types of RQs are asked by scholars in American Politics, Comparative Politics, and International Relations. The second part of the course is devoted to Literature Reviews. In this section of the class, students will learn how to conduct thorough library searches and how to write a literature review for a POLS research project. Section 3 of the class will focus on theories and research designs. Here, students will learn how to formulate testable hypotheses, and they will construct a research design built to examine their theoretical expectations. The final section of the class will highlight how to conduct data analysis, and it will expose students to advanced research designs in Political Science.

HyFLEX FORMAT

This course will be taught using the "HYFLEX" Instruction Method. This method is designed to provide students the opportunity of an in-class experience while allowing for social distancing.

Here is what a typical week is going to look like:

- a. There will be a number of pre-recorded lectures (all available on bblearn).
- b. There will be a number of readings for you to complete. Each day with a reading on the syllabus will have an associated reading quiz (to be completed on bblearn prior to the regular start time of our class).

- c. Most weeks, there will be **two** discussion questions for you to consider: an **online discussion question** and an **in-person discussion question**. Every student will have to engage with both discussion questions by the end of the week.
- d. In addition, you will have to work on your Homeworks and written assignments.

There will be **NO** in-person class sessions on Monday. I will be available in my office and via zoom during our regular meeting time. Feel free to use this time slot to talk to me about the material, ask questions about the class, and discuss your paper projects. I hope that many of you will take me up on this offer. Most weeks, my pre-recorded Monday-lecture will conclude with a presentation of an “online discussion question.” Every student is required to contribute to this online discussion question with 3 posts: an initial reflection to the discussion prompt and 2 responses to other students’ posts. The deadline to make these discussion contributions is Friday at 6pm (but make sure to space out your contributions over the course of the week). The discussion board will automatically shut down at 6:00pm on Friday.

We **WILL** have in-person meetings (most) Wednesdays and (most) Fridays. However, to accommodate social distancing, only half of all enrolled course participants will come to class. There will be 2 student groups: Group Silver and Group Gold. Your group assignment is presented to you on bblearn. Both groups will have the option of coming to class on Wednesday **or** Friday on an alternating schedule.

- a. **Group Silver** will attend class on the following days:

- August 26 (Wednesday)
- September 4 (Friday)
- September 9 (Wednesday)
- September 23 (Wednesday)
- October 2 (Friday)
- October 7 (Wednesday)
- October 16 (Friday)
- October 21 (Wednesday)
- November 4 (Wednesday)
- November 13 (Friday)

- b. **Group Gold** will attend class on the following days:

- August 28 (Friday)
- September 2 (Wednesday)
- September 11 (Friday)
- September 25 (Friday)
- September 30 (Wednesday)
- October 9 (Friday)
- October 14 (Wednesday)
- October 23 (Friday)
- November 6 (Friday)
- November 11 (Wednesday)

Our Wednesday and Friday in-person meetings will have identical structure and content. During the first 10-15 minutes, everyone will have the opportunity to ask questions about the material. The remainder of the class is then reserved for in-class discussion. More specifically, I will pose this week's "in-person discussion question" and we will spend the course session to explore this issue together. Please note: I will **NOT** take attendance during our in-person class sessions. In other words, your participation in these meetings is optional. However, should you choose to stay at home, you are still required to participate in the discussion online. In other words, if you choose that option, you would have to contribute to the in-person discussion on bblearn. In this case, you would be required to make 3 additional bblearn posts by 6pm on Friday: an initial reflection to the "in-person" discussion prompt and 2 responses to other students' posts.

Lastly, there will be six mandatory workshop meetings (hosted by various guest lecturers). These workshops meetings will take place via zoom during our regular scheduled class time. Everyone is **required** to attend these workshop meetings via **zoom**. Non-attendance will lead to a grade reduction (10 percent of your participation grade per unexcused absence). The dates of these workshops are provided on the course schedule below. Please note: some of these workshops will take place on a Monday.

COURSE MATERIALS

You will need to buy one book for this class:

- Baglione, Lisa (2020). Writing a Research Paper in Political Science. A Practical Guide to Inquiry, Structure, & Methods. Fourth Edition. Thousand Oaks, CA: CQ Press (buy this edition – older editions have different page and chapter numbers!).

All *other* readings on the syllabus will be provided to you online. It is absolutely essential that you carefully read all of the required material *prior to coming to each class session and prior to watching each pre-recorded video lecture*. I expect that you take your responsibilities seriously. Failing to do so will both significantly impact your grade and the quality of our in-class activities.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND GRADES

- 15% Participation in Class Discussions
- 20% Four Homework Assignments
- 25% Online Reading Quizzes
- 40% Research Paper
 - Part I: Research Question and Literature Review (10%)
 - Part II: Theory and Hypothesis (10%)
 - Part III: Research Design (10%)
 - Part IV: Analysis and Conclusion (10%)

Attendance

As noted, I will **not** take attendance during our in-person meetings. Exceptions are the mandatory workshops listed on the schedule. These workshops meetings will take place via zoom during our regular scheduled class time. Everyone is required to attend these workshop meetings. Non-attendance will lead to a grade reduction (10 percent of your participation grade

per unexcused absence). Needless to say, should you have any emergency that prevents you from attending one of these workshops, I will waive the zoom-attendance requirement. However, if that is the case, you have to tell me **ahead of time**.

Discussion Contributions (15 percent)

Your participation grade will be based on the quality and quantity of your verbal / written contributions during each week's class discussions (**online discussion** and **in-person discussion**). As stated above, every student has to engage with all relevant discussion questions for a given week. For the online discussion question, every student is required to contribute 3 posts: an initial reflection to the discussion prompt and 2 responses to other students' posts. The deadline to make these discussion contributions is Friday at 6pm. The discussion board will automatically shut down at 6:00pm on Friday. Furthermore, if you choose to contribute to the in-person discussion via bblearn, the same rules apply.

Online Reading Quizzes (25 percent)

Each day with a reading on the syllabus will have an associated reading quiz. This quiz needs to be completed on bblearn prior to the regular start time of our class. Over the course of the semester, there will be 30 reading quizzes. Each quiz will count towards 1 percent of your overall course grade. However, I will only count the 25 highest grades. In other words, your five lowest quiz grades will be dropped at the end of the semester.

Four Homework Assignments (20 percent)

There will be 4 homework assignments over the course of the term. Each assignment is graded on a scale from 0 to 100 and counts towards 5 percent of your final grade. The due dates can be found in the course schedule below. Late assignments will not be accepted.

Paper (40 percent)

As part of your final grade you will have to write a research paper in which you apply the tools introduced in this class. The paper will be divided into four parts. More information will be provided in class.

GRADE SCALE

Note: final grades will NOT be rounded

- A = 90.00-100.00
- B = 80.00-89.99
- C = 70.00-79.99
- D = 60.00-69.99
- F = 00.00-59.99

COURSE POLICIES

Deadlines

The assignments in this class are all designed to help you write a Political Science Research Paper. In general, late work will not be accepted. However, I do recognize that we all live in unusual times. If there is a documented emergency that prevents you from completing one of the class assignments at the scheduled date, I would be happy to work with you. However, you have to reach out to me **prior to due date for a given assignment**.

Academic Honesty

It is the policy of our department to refer instances of suspected academic dishonesty to the Student Judicial Council. For the Dean of Students' Academic Integrity site which includes UI Policies and Student Academic Dishonesty Resources, see <https://www.uidaho.edu/student-affairs/dean-of-students/student-conduct/academic-integrity>.

Disabilities

Reasonable accommodations are available for students who have documented temporary or permanent disabilities. All accommodations must be approved through the Center for Disability Access and Resources located in the Bruce M. Pitman Center, Suite 127 in order to notify your instructor(s) as soon as possible regarding accommodation(s) needed for the course.

- Phone: 208-885-6307
- Email: cdar@uidaho.edu
- Website: www.uidaho.edu/current-students/cdar

Tutoring and College Success (TCS)

TCS offers three distinct services dedicated to student success: tutoring, SI-PASS, and Academic Coaching. Vandal Tutoring provides drop-in style tutoring in person at the Library or online through uidaho.edu/tutoringonline at no cost to undergraduates. SI-PASS provides peer assisted study sessions for difficult courses. You can find the schedule of currently supported courses at uidaho.edu/si. Academic Coaching offers students an opportunity to work with a coach, one on one, to improve their academic skills such as: effective studying, test taking, time management, and note taking. Visit uidaho.edu/academic-coaching to schedule an appointment.

Electronic Device Policy

The use of cell phones, iPods, iPads, or any other electronic device will not be permitted during class meetings. I will permit you a laptop ONLY to take notes and review online readings. Please note that I reserve the right to reverse this policy at any time.

Assignment and Grade Record-Keeping

Students are responsible for saving all graded work until final grades are recorded with the registrar and checked by the student.

Classroom Learning Civility

In any environment in which people gather to learn, it is essential that all members feel as free and safe as possible in their participation. To this end, it is expected that everyone in this course will be treated with mutual respect and civility, with an understanding that all of us (students, instructors, guests, and teaching assistants) will be respectful and civil to one another in discussion, in action, in teaching, and in learning. Should you feel our classroom interactions do not reflect an environment of civility and respect, you are encouraged to meet with your instructor during office hours to discuss your concern. Additional resources for expression of concern or requesting support include the Dean of Students office and staff (5-6757), the UI Counseling & Testing Center's confidential services (5-6716), or the UI Office of Human Rights, Access, & Inclusion (5-4285).

Grade Appeals

If you believe your exams or assignments have been graded unfairly, you can appeal your grade in written form. You have to hand in your appeal on the day after the assignment or exam was returned. Comparisons to other students' graded assignments will not be accepted for a complaint. Hand in the original copy of the graded assignment/exam together with the written appeal. I will reevaluate your grade in light of the argument that you made. However, the new grade may be the same, higher, or lower than the original grade and it will be final.

Healthy Vandals Policies

It is a longstanding tradition that Vandals take care of Vandals, and we all do our best to look out for the Vandal Family. The simple precautions listed below go a long way in reducing the impact of coronavirus on our campuses and in our communities. With everyone engaging in these small actions, we can continue to participate in our vibrant campus culture where we are able to learn, live, and grow. Visit [U of I's COVID-19 page](#) often for updated information. Questions related to the University of Idaho's coronavirus response can be sent to covid19questions@uidaho.edu.

Refrain from attending class in-person if you are ill, if you are experiencing any of the [known symptoms of coronavirus](#), or if you have tested positive for COVID-19 or been potentially exposed to someone with COVID-19.

- If you display symptoms and/or test positive, you should quarantine following the [CDC's recommendations](#). Do not return to class until you meet the [CDC's requirements](#).
- If you have been exposed but are asymptomatic, you should stay home for 14 days from the last exposure if you remain asymptomatic, adhering to the [CDC's requirements](#).

Documentation (a doctor's note) for medical excuses is not required; instead, email me to make arrangements to submit any missed work and make plans to use Zoom and/or online course materials to stay current with the course schedule.

All faculty, staff, students and visitors across all U of I locations must use face coverings over the nose and mouth whenever in any U of I buildings. Thus, you are required to wear a face covering in the classroom at all times.

- If you have a medical condition that affects your ability to comply with the face covering policy, please contact the Center for Disability Access and Resources (CDAR) to request a reasonable accommodation.
- If you have other reasons you believe make you exempt from wearing face coverings, please contact the COVID-19 Coordinator.
- Failure to wear a face covering over your nose and mouth will require you to leave the classroom immediately. If a disruption to the learning experience occurs due to repeated offence and/or egregious behavior, you will be reported to the Dean of Students Office for a potential code violation.

COURSE SCHEDULE (This is only a tentative schedule for this course. Content may change)

PART I: Introduction – Research Questions in POLS		
Week 1		Course Introduction
	August 24 (M)	This syllabus.
Silver	August 26 (W)	Pollock 2012 (pages 6 – 12).
Gold	August 28 (F)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Johnson, Reynolds and Mycoff 2019 (pages 49 – 53). • Baglione Chapter 2.
Week 2		Research Questions in Political Science
	August 31 (M)	Watch the Documentary “Knock Down the House” (Netflix Production publicly available on YouTube): https://youtu.be/YCSo2hZRcXk
Gold	Sept. 2 (W)	Watch the Documentary “China: Power and Prosperity” (PBS Production publicly available on YouTube): https://youtu.be/JovtmKFXi3c
Silver	Sept. 4 (F)	No readings.
Week 3		Paper-Writing Basics
	Sept. 7 (M)	No class!
Silver	Sept. 9 (W)	Kellstedt and Whitten Chapter 1. Due Date for Homework 1.
Gold	Sept. 11 (F)	Baglione Chapter 3.
PART II: The Literature Review		
Week 4		Working on a Literature Review
Live Zoom!	Sept. 14 (M)	Mandatory Library Workshop 1.
Live Zoom!	Sept. 16 (W)	Mandatory Library Workshop 2. Due Date for Homework 2.
	Sept. 18 (F)	Research Day.

Week 5		Working on a Literature Review II
Live Zoom!	Sept. 21 (M)	Mandatory Library Workshop 3
Silver	Sept. 23 (W)	Baglione Chapter 4. Due Date for Homework 3.
Gold	Sept. 25 (F)	Familiarize yourself with the APA-Citation Guide: https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/purdue_owl.html (make sure to click on "APA Guide" > "APA Formatting and Style Guide" and then explore all tabs that follow).
		PART III: Theories and Research Designs
Week 6		Theories and Hypotheses I
	Sept. 28 (M)	Fuhrmann 2009 (pages 7 – 12).
Gold	Sept. 30 (W)	Kellstedt and Whitten Chapter 2. Due Date for Introduction (1 page) and Literature Review (3 pages).
Silver	Oct. 2 (F)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Re-Read Fuhrmann 2009 (pages 10 – 12) • Fuhrmann 2009 (pages 12 – 15).
Week 7		Theories and Hypotheses II
	Oct. 5 (M)	Johnson, Reynolds and Mycoff 2019 (pages 73 – 86).
Silver	Oct. 7 (W)	Baglione Chapter 5 (skip section called "The Thesis").
Gold	Oct. 9 (F)	Johnson, Reynolds and Mycoff 2019 (pages 121 – 124).
Week 8		Research Design I
	Oct. 12 (M)	Johnson, Reynolds and Mycoff 2019 (pages 135 – 140). Due Date for Theory & Hypothesis (1-2 pages).
Gold	Oct. 14 (W)	He 2013.
Silver	Oct. 16 (F)	Johnson and Reynolds 2013 (pages 278 – 291).
Week 9		Research Design II
	Oct. 19 (M)	Johnson, Reynolds and Mycoff 2019 (pages 196 – 202).
Silver	Oct. 21 (W)	Johnson and Reynolds 2013 (pages 292 – 305).
Gold	Oct. 23 (F)	Fuhrmann 2009 (pages 15-23 only)

Week 10		Research Design III
	Oct. 26 (M)	Baglione Chapter 7 (skip section called “The Thesis”).
Live Zoom!	Oct. 28 (W)	Mandatory Library Workshop 4. Reader on Research Design.
	Oct. 30 (F)	Research Day.
PART IV: Theory Testing		
Week 11		Theory Testing I
	Nov. 2 (M)	Baglione Chapter 8 (skip the section called “Quantitative and Statistical Analysis”). Due Date for Research Design (3 pages).
Silver	Nov. 4 (W)	Tannenwald 1999.
Gold	Nov. 6 (F)	Koivu 2016.
Week 12		Theory Testing II
	Nov. 9 (M)	Pollock 2012 (pages 28 – 32).
Gold	Nov. 11 (W)	Pollock 2012 (pages 58 – 71).
Silver	Nov. 13 (F)	Reader on Theory Testing.
Week 13		Professionalization in Political Science
Live Zoom!	Nov. 16 (M)	Mandatory Professionalization Workshop 1. Due Date for Homework 4.
Live Zoom!	Nov. 18 (W)	Mandatory Professionalization Workshop 2.
	Nov. 20 (F)	Research Day

Week 14		Thanksgiving Break
	Nov. 23 (M)	No class.
	Nov. 25 (W)	No class.
	Nov. 27 (F)	No class.
Week 15		Advanced Political Science Research Methods
	Nov. 30 (M)	Piston et al. 2018 (pages 662-669 only).
	Dec. 2 (W)	Justwan and Fisher 2020.
	Dec. 4 (F)	Readings Tba.
Week 16		Course Conclusion
	Dec. 7 (M)	Research Day.
	Dec. 9 (W)	Review and Catch-Up Day.
	Dec. 11 (F)	Course Conclusion.
Week 17		Finals Week
	Dec. 14 (M) at 11:59 pm	<p>Due date for Final Version of Term Paper</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction (1 page) and Literature Review (3 pages) • Theory & Hypothesis (1-2 pages) • Research Design (3 pages) • Analysis (3 pages) and Conclusion (1 page) <p>(email your paper to: fjustwan@uidaho.edu)</p>